

Atlanta Ham

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE ATLANTA RADIO CLUB, W4DOC

MARCH 2009

"Just what is this LxPedition stuff I keep hearing?"

Some folks around the club have been asking me "Just what is this LxPedition stuff I keep hearing?"

An LxPedition is like a DxPedition except a) no radio maker is going to equip you with the latest and greatest b) if all else fails you can take a Greyhound bus back home and c) you probably know most of the folks you will be talking with on the air.

The name "LxPedition" was coined about a year ago during a morning drive-time chat to describe a trip to Tennessee I was about to make. I intended to set up a portable station and low 80meter dipole and play radio from the top of a mountain one evening from there. The group decided on some frequencies and times and we made a schedule for contact. Lx" is for local though the whole "x" thing has been augmented with "BxPedition" for the balloon lifted vertical experiment, "TxPedition" for a Texas trip, and Arnold's (KC4ZUA) dead-of-winter Kansas trip "KxPedition" of about two years ago. That was also the farthest LxPedition attempt - a less than successful attempt in that Arnold was heard exactly twice but never heard any of us calling back. This LxPedition has also been called the "SxPedition" where "s" means "snow".

For our purposes an LxPedition has three components. First, someone must be working away from home -

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Jorge de la Torre KI4SGU ready to go on another LxPedition

By-Laws Committee update

Source: Bill Perkins KB4KFT

Saturday February 21st was the first meeting of the by-laws committee. Turn out was not bad for a first meeting. Jim N4BFR started taking notes and became the recorder for the day. David W4CLR arrived with a well thought out list of points to consider that became the driving force of 2/3rds of the discussion.

Hugh Howell KG4ILQ accepted the job as chairman of the committee and will be posting details of future meetings. Hugh has a good insight into the workings of the club and will do a fine job as chairman.

Because of some discussions held today surrounding election rules and processes, some preliminary decisions made, there is a hard deadline of May's meeting to get new by-laws before the club's membership. We want to have everything in place before the next election and that means we need to get an up or down vote at the May meeting. Missing this May deadline means delaying the new by-laws vote until at least September's meeting - not good.

Bill KB4KFT would like to thank the members of the club who have volunteered to work on this project (in alphabetical order): Bert KE4FOV, Charles

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Don't forget: Meeting at the Red Cross HQ Thurs. March 5th

THE ATLANTA HAM

The **Atlanta HAM** is the official bulletin of The Atlanta Radio Club serving its members and the Atlanta community. Original articles, art, and photos are welcome. Copyrighted material cannot be printed without permission from the appropriate legal authority. Please include such disclaimers in all materials submitted.

Submit articles:

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385 Madison Chase Dr
Lawrenceville, GA 30045

Contact the editor for available formats to transfer material.

**DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS IS
THE 21ST OF EACH MONTH!**

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W4DOC sponsors WORKED ALL GEORGIA Award

This is for the newbies to Atlanta. Ever wonder why a state the size of Georgia would have 159 counties? California, which is THREE times as big, only has 58. So why 159 for Georgia? Some people say it's to provide a more fertile environment for, um, "local politics." Others say it's so that every person in the state could go by mule from his home to the county seat and back in one day.

We think not. We think that, in a moment of clairvoyant foreknowledge, our state leaders knew that Ham Radio operators of the next century would appreciate a challenge, and structured the present administrative nightmare solely for the benefit of our hobby!

Therefore, the Atlanta Radio Club, a Special Service Club of the Amateur Radio Relay League, with the support of the Georgia Section of the ARRL, is proud to announce a new award, the "Worked All Georgia" Award. The WAG Award is open to radio amateurs who can provide proof of two-way radio amateur radio contact with all 159 counties in the state of Georgia. Progress Certificates are available for 50 and 100 Georgia counties. This award is nice complement to the annual Georgia QSO Party, which in fact would be a good time to work on some of those hard-to-get counties.

All contacts count, old and new -- so pull out the QSL cards and see how close you already are. The details of the WAG Award are as follows:

Modes: Mixed, CW, Phone (SSB, AM, FM), Digital (RTTY, PSK31, either individually or collectively), Satellite, Single Band (2m through 160m), 5 Band (10m 15m 20m, 40m, and 80m), QRP (5 watts for the award station)

Conditions: All QSOs must be 2-way using the same mode. No repeater or cross-mode contacts allowed. For the basic award, all contacts must be made from the same "Home QTH." However, to encourage people to get out and drive around, set up their rigs in the deer stand, or take it along in the RV, or whatever, we have a special "ROVER" endorsement. For this endorsement, contacts with Georgia counties count no matter where they were made. Just indicate that on the application form.

For more info and instructions on how to apply for the award, www.w4doc.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=18&Itemid=5

Two lunch groups on Fridays to choose from

Being that we are called the Atlanta Radio Club it is fair to say that folks come from all over the metro area to attend the general monthly club meeting on the first Thursday of the month. Well, what happens as you try to have a friendly lunch gathering during the week when folks are trying to juggle the drive time. No problem, you just offer multiple lunch groups in your area.

If you work inside the perimeter you now have an option that might be a little closer. A small group of folks are meeting at El Torero on Fridays around Noon. The restaurant is located at 5575 Peachtree Ind. Blvd., just south of all the car dealerships on the left. Obviously the name says it all, GREAT FLAVOR—SOUTH OF THE BORDER! There always seems to be a piece of equipment on the table whether it is a radio, a kit, or just an old piece of equipment someone picked up at the last hamfest for show-n-tell.

For those of you who have been around the club for awhile, the group known as the Friday Lunch Bunch has been getting together for quite some time now along the northern perimeter somewhere between Hwy 400 and I-75 as space has dictated. Recently the group has moved to a new location, TGIF Fridays at 2150 Powers Ferry Rd. Al Ramsey W4VMV, longtime Lunch Bunch member, has created a webpage (<http://alramsey.us/Lunch/ARC.html#Top>) with a little info and mug shots of likely suspects. This is a great group to eat lunch with and as with the new group meeting in Chamblee this group usually does a lot of show-n-tell. Jack Yaesel N4TEB usually has a toy or two out on the table for the group to play with. Get out on Fridays, lunch can be a lot of fun whether it's burgers or Mexican food.

METRO TESTING SESSIONS

Call ahead to verify session and be prepared with the appropriate forms and required papers. A small fee may be charged. Check with the VEC

Athens, GA

1st Monday of each EVEN-numbered month at 7:00 pm 2095 W. Broad Street.

Contact: EDWIN FUQUA, N4VA

(706) 354-1727 E: edwin.fuqua@charter.net

Cartersville, GA

1st Tuesday of each month at the Cartersville Kroger. Contact: JODI POWELL, AG4BK (770) 387-1591

Gainesville, GA

1st Sunday of EVEN-numbered months Johnson High School, 3305 Poplar Springs Rd

Contact: ALFRED WESTBROOK, KT4VP

(770) 965-4901 Email: kt4vp@arrl.net

Milledgeville, GA ARRL / VEC

2nd Saturday of each month at 10:00 am at the Mary Vinson Memorial Library, 151 S. Jefferson St across from the Georgia Military Academy. Contact: OTIS MURPHY W4OY (478) 452-6394 Email: W4OY@arrl.net

Peachtree City, GA

1st Thursday of EVEN-numbered months at 7:00 pm, and the 2nd Saturday of ODD-numbered months at 10:00 am at the Peachtree City Library, downstairs meeting room. Contact: JAN DUBROCA, KN4JD (770) 502-0760

Snellville, GA

2nd Tuesday of every month at 7:00 pm at Walton EMC, 3645 Lenora Church Road.

Contact: WAYNE TAYLOR, WD3CCA

(770) 498-7759

Stone Mountain, GA ARRL / VEC

Alford Memorial Radio Club

2nd Saturday of ODD-months at 8:30 am Stone Mountain United Methodist Church, 5312 W. Mountain St.

Contact: BOB VARONE, W4ETN

(770) 978 3179 Email: bvarone@juno.com

East Atlanta and Gwinnett County, GA

Gwinnett Amateur Radio Society

3rd Sunday of each month, 3-5PM

Gwinnett Public Library—Five Forks Branch 2780 Five Forks Trickum Rd Lawrenceville GA

Atlanta, GA

4th Sunday of each month, 2:30pm GATECH Visit <http://cyberbuzz.gatech.edu/w4aql/test.html>

How 'bout a Fox Hunt for May!

The Walton County (Georgia) Emergency Radio Club (WCERC) is planning a Fox Hunt during the CQ Magazine Worldwide Fox Hunting Weekend in May. Atlanta Radio Club members are invited to participate at WCERC's kit building session on February 16th in Loganville and at the Fox Hunt in May.

This is a great opportunity to learn about and/or brush up on our Amateur Radio Direction Finding (ARDF) skills.

Kit Information: <http://www.handi-finder.com>

Please contact David, AI4JI at www.wcerc.org concerning the purchase of kits and other details.

February 16 Handi-Finder Build Day - AI4JI

May 9,10 CQ Worldwide Fox Hunting Weekend (These dates may be changed to another weekend in May. Updates will follow.)

NEWS, NOTES, & CLASSIFIEDS...

Congratulations K2UFT!

Dick Bentley, K2UFT, says it took him 52 years, during which he rarely exceeded 100W, and never used anything more exotic than an 80 M loop or dipole. But, by golly, he did it!! Confirmation of his contacts with 345 entities recently earned him a place on the prestigious DXCC Honor Roll. CONGRATULATIONS, Dick. That's quite an accomplishment.

Source: ARRL GA Section News

UPCOMING HAMFEST CALENDAR

21 MARCH Kennehoochee Amateur Radio Club www.w4bti.org
Talk-In: 146.880 - offset (PL100)

25 APRIL Calhoun Hamfest Cherokee Capital Amateur Radio Society
www.k4woc.com **Talk-In:** 443.675+ and 146.805+

2 MAY Birmingham Hamfest

6 JUNE Georgia State Convention Atlanta Radio Club W4DOC
www.atlantahamfest.com **Talk-In:** 146.820 (PL 146.2)

Sunday Night Net: All amateurs are invited to check into the Sunday Night Net at 8:00 PM on the 146.82 repeater. This net features comments from all check-ins, club news from club officers and committee chairpersons, a swap shop, and a discussion topic, if requested. 224.34 and 444.825 are normally linked in as well for the Sunday Night Net.

By-Laws...

(Continued from page 1)

W4CHG, David W4CLR, George AI4RU, Hugh KG4ILQ, Jim N4BFR,

by volunteering they are helping the club adapt and grow. When you see one of them be sure to thank

club the more rewarding the membership and they are helping us have a better club.

This is not a glamorous job, might even be dull and boring. But by volunteering they are helping the club adapt and grow.

— Bill Perkins KB4KFT

Marianne KI4ZCH, and Penn K4PE.

This is not a glamorous job, might even be dull and boring. But

them for their service and extra attention to what is needed. In the end, the better the

Acknowledging Hugh as the committee chairman, Bill KB4KFT will step down from that role. He would like to be involved in the remainder of this updating of the by-laws as he do have some ideas, but from here on Hugh calls the shots.

LxPedition...

(Continued from page 1)

portable and outside is best but working from a cabin, house or hotel is OK too. Second, the traveling person is going to try to get back to folks here in the Atlanta area using set times and frequencies decided in advance. Third, once back home the traveling person needs to let us know what techniques worked for him and what did not work.

The very first attempt was Bill (KB4KFT) setting up a 80meter dipole about three feet off the ground in Blue Ridge, GA, in August 2007. This is now known and the "spider event" due to the saucer sized spider lurking in the antenna's projected path that Bill almost walked into. The latest two were Dave's (KJ4BWO) attempt from Orlando which has not yet acquired a nick-name but did involve a run-in with some security guard type people and John's (K4WIT) from Charleston, SC, which had many types of antennas to be tried. Dave never made it on the air, John was there, was worked, right at the noise level.

There is a Yahoo group set up for this activity, "LxPeditonsAtlanta" in "groups.yahoo.com". You have to have participated in an LxPedition in order to become a member of this group, either as a traveler or as someone who makes contact with the traveler. But all content on the group is available to read and view to anyone. Feel free to drop by and check out what we are doing.



The Signman of Baton Rouge



The Atlanta Amateur Radio Club badge has a Silver background with blue letters and the Club Logo in gold. The distinctive Atlanta skyline; designed by Roy Epps, K4UWO, makes this name tag unique.

Go online to order...Ask for the Atlanta ARC badge!

PO Box 84107
Baton Rouge, LA 70808-4107 USA
(225) 757-1545 Phone
225-208-1545 Fax
Toll-Free 877-SIGNMAN
[Http://thesignman.com](http://thesignman.com)



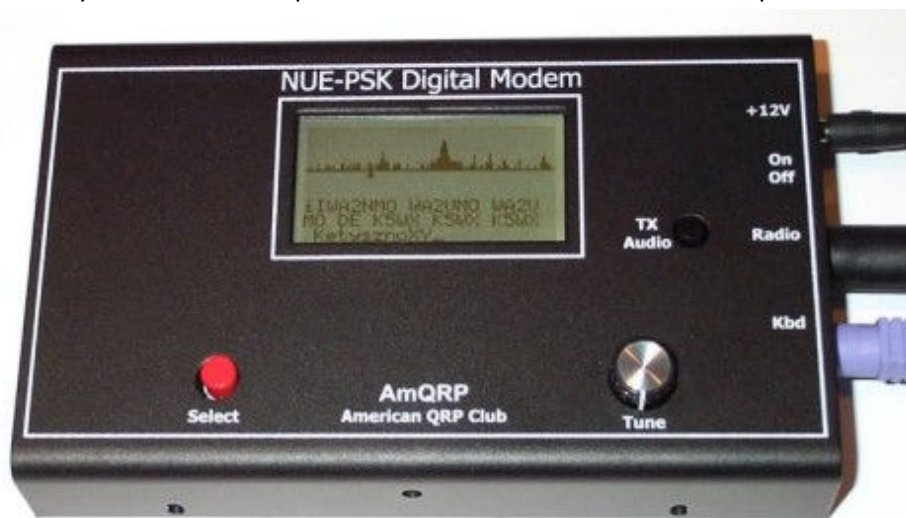
Tech Session - February Wrap-up

The Second Sunday Tech Session for the month of February has come and gone. Our meeting room, a metal stud building, under a metal roof attached to a metal "garage", located at PDK has some fiberglass involved in the place but I'd bet that fiberglass has metal wire strands in it. This makes RF experimenting there fairly safe since very little RF can escape or leak

Harold Hawkins KD8DVY
& **Bill Perkins KB4KFT**

Approximately 30 people were in attendance and it went off without a hitch, everyone had a blast with the many different systems that were running. The funny thing about the tech session was the fact that everyone had the Yaesu FT-817 or the Yaesu FT-897.

These rigs, which can be used with a rig blaster, HRD, or any program that will allow them to operate in their various modes was not the showcase of the tech session. The topic was **HF**



An easy and portable way to get on the air with PSK-31 ... no computer required!

to the outside world. Even so some folks were getting DX type contacts with PSK31 via the windows. Because of the proximity of all the rigs we were using very low power on 10M and with the band closed, that makes it even clearer how well some of these digital modes work. I, for one, was very impressed by that.

The Tech Session for the month of February followed what I have come to coin Skywarn 101x. Which means this was an experimental light teaching of the workings of severe weather and what to look for if and when there is a severe weather alert in the metro Atlanta area.

There was no presentation for this session; we went straight from introductions to playing with radios.

digital and the method, as usual for this group, was hands-on testing and trying.

Several attendees had various tech items. One piece of equipment that stood out was the PSK modem from NUE-QRP. This modem has a meter and has the ability to allow you to store up to seven (7) macros for quick operation and it allows you to connect and run from just about anywhere that you portable will go. The main advantage of this modem is that you do not need a computer to run PSK-31.

The one down fall that we all agreed upon was that in order for you to see and operate the modem you had to sit there and read the screen, which is a dot matrix screen. You can further view the features and

Have a tech tip, article, equipment review to share?

We're looking for folks to share their experience and technical know-how by contributing to this column. If you would be interested in writing something, let us know! Johnn3ack@comcast.net

read about this modem at www.nue-psk.com

The price of this kit varies depending on what kind of ham you are. The prices start as low as \$25 for the PCB and goes all the way up to \$250 for the full modem ready to go out the box.

George KI4SDO, our club secretary, was running his rig with LINUX and he also played around with my homebrew loading coil that I put together for my multi-band end-fed antenna. He also did some slow scan television (SSTV) for the group that was in attendance. I have seen that done before but did not like it, but it's best to know how to use it because it might come in hand one day.

Everyone in the room was able to transmit from one to another seeing that we were only operating on 10m and about 45 watts. As for the modem it was monitoring stations from all over the states with a 10M stick and counterpoise that Bryan WD4DX had brought along.

There were two dipoles hung from various parts of the ceiling and several Ham Sticks poking up. George (AI4UR) was using a 2 meter mobile mag mount antenna – not recommended but at low power with the receiving station less than 3 yards away, it was effective. If anybody burned up anything they did not let on. It did get a bit warm in there around 4pm.

What did we learn?

- 1) Macintosh laptops do work when running Windows software – at least most of the time. Jim N4BFR was doing slow scan TV part of the afternoon and was getting signals out OK.
- 2) Those little Netbook style computers

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Second GPB tower now running D-STAR in Georgia

Tech Corner...

are perfect for integrating computers and HAM. Very small, very light, long battery life and oodles of disk space. Built-in cameras (for SSTV), good sound cards, USB slots all over, really nice. The only thing to watch when buying one is to make sure there are separate audio in and out (headphone and microphone) jacks. HP apparently combines these two functions into one jack and does not play well with most HAM digital software. There were several Windows netbooks there, and one with LINUX.

3) Sending a SSTV picture that is mainly black and dark blue is probably not the best picture to send as a test. Then again, maybe I just don't see so well anymore.

4) If you don't pay attention to scrolling text on the PSK31 modem it scrolls off the left edge of the display and is gone more or less forever. However, that is a neat device (www.NUE-PKS.org) and worth looking into. Thanks Bill (WB4WTN) for bringing yours and showing it off.

5) Those little Yaesu FT-817 rigs are really nice. Seems like every other person there Sunday had one, and every one of them worked. Now if they just made a 100 watt HF linear that could attach directly to the case...

6) Another HF champ was the Yaesu FT-897. There were at least two of them and both seemed to be very capable - and portable - rigs.

7) 10 meter dipoles will fall on you if you step on the coax feed hard enough. I learned that one personally. Also, related to this, black RG-8X is almost impossible to see if one is walking backwards while talking.

8) Be nice to Mike (KF4UPO).

Part of the fun of one of these types of events is looking at other people's setups in order to improve one's own.

Thanks to the work of Robin Cutshaw (AA4RC), Repeater Trustee Joey Sapp (NC4D) and many folks of the Statesboro Amateur Radio Society, KJ4GGV on the GPB tower at Pembroke, GA can now connect to the world. It's D-STAR Gateway began operation this afternoon.

John Davis
WB4QDX

KG4GGV is the second repeater of the D-STAR repeater system being constructed on the Georgia Public Broadcasting television towers. When completed, the nine sites will provide near statewide coverage on 2 meters, 440 and 1.2 GHz voice and data coverage using the D-STAR digital system. Link in to KJ4GGV and give them a call!

W4DOC REPEATER NEWS & NOTES

All three repeaters require a CTCSS tone of 146.2 Hz.

146.820 (-) (IRLP Node 4550) 224.340 (-) 444.825 (+) (IRLP Node 5070)

The current schedule for net operations include the Sunday Night Net on 146.820 at 8PM EST and the Southeastern VHF Net on Wednesday evenings at 9PM. The 146.820 machine can also be dialed into IRLP and SKYWARN/Peachtree City during inclement weather.

D-Star Repeaters (Bank of America Tower)

145.350 (-0.6 MHz) W4DOC C 444.600 (+5.0 MHz) W4DOC B

1282.60 (-1.2 MHz) W4DOC A 1297.625 (Data) W4DOC D

D-Star on Stone Mountain (Joint ARC/GA ARES)

145.960 (+2.5 MHz) WX4GPB C 444.700 (+5.0 MHz) WX4GPB B

1282.700 (-1.2 MHz) WX4GPB A 1297.125 (Data) WX4GPB D

Sunday Tech Session

Submitted by: Bill Perkins KB4KFT

The monthly meeting of the "Second Sunday Tech Session" will be Sunday, March 8th at 3:00p in the main conference room at the main administration building of Dekalb Peachtree Airport (PDK) in Chamblee. The building is at the end of the main entrance to the airport - just follow the road off Clairemont down to the cul-de-sac parking lot at its end. The conference room is in the building marked "Epps". Come in the main entrance take the stairs at the left, the room is on the left at the top of the stairs - room 227.

Talk-in (unofficial) is on the 146.820 machine (minus with 146.2 PL) Most times simplex 146.520 is also monitored.

Topic for the month: CW Practice and Technique by Dick (K2UFT). (What? You don't know Dick?) Dick will be leading us through an exploration of CW, sending and receiving, jargon used on and off the air, prosigns, abbreviations, and working pile-ups. As usual for these sessions about any topic in the CW world might pop up.

Dick is a strong believer in CW First, an avid and experienced contester, and I can tell you from watching him about the best CW operator I've ever seen. This is a session not to be missed.

Due to the nature of this session there have to be a few special rules. We

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ATLANTA HAMFEST 2009

Sponsored by: ARRL
and The Atlanta Radio Club
W4DOC

Gates Open: 8:00AM—3:00PM Admission: \$5 (Under 18 Free) Tailgate Set-Up : 6:30 AM Saturday



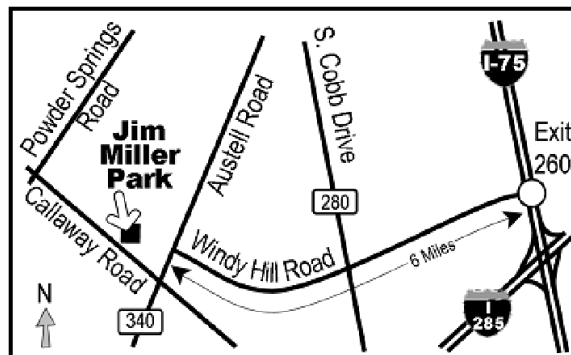
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SATURDAY JUNE 6TH

Jim Miller Park, Cobb Co.

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www.atlantahamfest.com



Sunday Tech Session...

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will start the session (as usual) with a short presentation that is of general interest to anyone wanting to know about CW. However, the real meat of this session, the hands-on part, will be sending and receiving CW as a group. Unless you are already well on your way to working CW this part will be of little use.

At the transition between presentation and practice those people not doing practice will be expected to leave the room. We want to allow those doing practice to concentrate without distractions from conversation and traffic. In short, the hands-on part of this one will not be open to spectators.

Rules:

1) The hands-on part is not an first class in CW. If you are not well on your way to leaning your CW alphabet then this is not the session for you. If you are just starting to learn CW you might find the presentation of interest but probably not the practice.

2) Since sending and receiving CW is going to be part of this session you should bring your own key and practice set. Paddles are OK too if you are comfortable using them.

The practice set can be a simple oscillator - preferred. Some folks have keyers that produce audible CW, those are fine. Some folks have

full transceivers that have practice modes - OK as long as the rig can be used without transmitting. The smaller the rig the better as space may become an issue.

HRO did have practice sets last week, if you want to "downsize" your practice set check 'em out. I think Fry's in Duluth has them too - or at least they did.

3) I also will need to know ahead of time how many people are intending to attend the practice part of this session. We will want to make sure there is enough table space for everyone and bring tables in if necessary. There is no cost but I do need a count.

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MEETING NOTICE - THURSDAY MAR 5, 2009



TH F6A



Finally, the Amateur Handheld that everyone has been waiting for, the New Kenwood TH-F6A. The TH-F6A is a 144/220/440 MHz transceiver/receiver with dual-channel RX capability in a compact and powerful design. The first Tri-Band HT with 3 bands you can operate EVERY DAY! The TH-F6A boasts a list of unique features the competition is still scratching their heads over.

KENWOOD
Listen to the Future